

New group claims Lebanon killing

BEIRUT (AP) — A previously unknown group claimed responsibility Monday for last week's assassination in Beirut of a Sunni Muslim fundamentalist leader. It was the second claim for last Thursday's killing of Sheikh Nizar Al Halabi, gunned down by masked assassins outside his home. His son, driver and a bodyguard were wounded. Two Lebanese have been detained in connection with the killing, which has cast doubt on efforts to restore stability following the end in 1990 of Lebanon's 15-year civil war. Al Halabi, 43, headed the Islamic Charitable Projects Association, an organization bankrolling the fundamentalist Al-Aqsa group, whose members are estimated to number about 5,000. His deputy, Sheikh Mohammad Oraiqira, was chosen as successor on the same day. A caller, speaking in Lebanese-accented Arabic, telephoned the Beirut office of a Western news agency Monday to say his "Umma Party" group was responsible for Halabi's killing. "We carried out the execution... because of the association's Jewish origin and conduct," said the caller.

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Clock ticks down to deadline for Serbs

SARAJEVO (R) — North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) warplanes circled over Bosnia as the hours counted down to the Monday night deadline for Serb forces to ease their siege of Sarajevo or face renewed bombardment.

Bosnian Serb big guns around the capital were silent as dusk fell ahead of the 11 p.m. (2100 GMT) time. The United Nations and NATO had set for Serb commander General Ratko Mladic to comply with their demands.

"If he doesn't play ball he's going to get hit very, very hard," that is the bottom line," said U.N. spokesman Alexander Ivankov, reflecting the new tough-talking mood since NATO's three days of air raids last week.

But there was no sign of the guns being pulled back, the U.N. said, or any word from the Bosnian Serbs they would meet the demands. To remind the Bosnian Serbs of the threat two NATO jets roared over the "capital" Pale through low cloud.

Exactly a week after a devastating mortar attack on a Sarajevo market killed 38 people and injured 85, provoking NATO to act after long hesitation, the people of Sarajevo relished the new sense of protection.

"I'm not afraid at all," said cigarette-seller Zijada Aliechajic who was back at her stand where the mortar hit. "It's the Serb cowards who are shaking in their boots now... the world seems serious about stopping the war this time."

The United Nations has not waited for the deadline to pass to test Serb compliance. Convoys of trucks crossed in

and out of the city on a road opened by the U.N. in defiance of the Serbs.

U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke played down the concerns of the Bosnian government that a pause since Friday morning in NATO attacks had gone on too long.

"It took us many years to get to this point and I don't think a few hours either way is going to make a difference," he said.

In Brussels, NATO officials tried to take the heat out of expectations that air strikes might resume exactly at 11 p.m. said one senior NATO source: "The situation will then be fully assessed, it is not a deadline for the start of bombing."

With the threat of further bombardment hovering, the Serbs protested that their counter proposals to the U.N. had been misinterpreted. But a text of their position was stitched with conditions the U.N. had already said it would not countenance.

Mr. Holbrooke and European Union mediators kept up a hectic pace of diplomatic contacts ahead of Friday's proposed face-to-face meeting of Bosnian, Croatian and Yugoslav foreign ministers in Geneva.

Bosnia said again that the delay in air raids put its participation in Geneva in doubt.

Serb military sources claimed they were holding two French aviators whose Mirage fighter-bomber was shot down during raids last Thursday. The news raised fears the Bosnian Serbs could use them as hostages to ward off fresh air strikes.

U.N. officials in Sarajevo said the fact that Bosnian

was not waited for the deadline to pass to test Serb compliance.

Convoys of trucks crossed in

Women conference begins with emphasis on equality

BEIJING (Agencies) — The biggest U.N. gathering in history began on Monday in China's Great Hall of the People with an extravaganza that included female martial-arts experts and a U.N. declaration that sexual equality was the last great project of the 20th century.

The conference, held every 10 years, kicked off earlier with a lavish welcoming ceremony of the hall at which a workers' choir sang Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" and Chinese President Jiang Zemin quoted the Chinese saying that "women hold up half the sky."

But Mr. Jiang said discrimination against women was as old as history.

"Prejudices against women, like an invisible chain, fetter the hearts and minds of millions, such outworn mentality should have long been discarded," he said.

"Future generations will

(Continued on page 7)

the conference and a parallel non-governmental organizations (NGO) forum on women in the suburb of Maizhou.

Heads of 185 government delegations were among the audience in the Stalinist-style hall on the edge of Tiananmen Square who raised a roar of approval when female experts fought off male attackers with vicious kicks and punches in a martial-arts display.

"A revolution has begun," conference Secretary-General Gertrude Mongella declared to huge cheers from the delegates. "There's no going back. There's no going back."

"This conference is a milestone in the history of the United Nations' work for women," Dr. Ghali said in a speech delivered in his absence.

Thirty thousand women have flooded into Beijing for

(Continued on page 7)



King, Queen on private visit to U.K.

AMMAN (Petra) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor left Amman on Monday for London on a several-day private visit to the United Kingdom.

They were seen off at the airport by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Mohammad (photo above), Princess Taghrid, Crown Prince Hassan and other members of the royal family.

Also present to bid farewell to the King and Queen were Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shakir, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem, the speakers of parliament, cabinet members and senior officials as well as the British ambassador to Jordan.

Crown Prince Hassan was sworn in to serve as Regent during the King's absence.

Accompanying the King and Queen on their visit are several princes and princesses and Jordan's ambassador to the United Kingdom.

Israeli, PLO delegates start looking at maps

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) negotiating teams on Monday began studying maps to work out intricate security arrangements for expanding Palestinian rule in the West Bank, a PLO official said.

"Both sides will today open the maps and discuss them for the first time," chief PLO negotiator Ahmad Qourie told Reuters. "We are in the final stages now. We did not open them before because we had to agree on the principle first."

The talks, in Israel's Red Sea resort of Eilat, resumed on Sunday night. The sides are more than a year behind schedule on expanding 16-month-old self-rule beyond Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho.

"We are talking about borders and security arrangements which require detailed maps," Mr. Qourie said in a reference to an Israeli troop redeployment away from West Bank Palestinian cities as envisaged in their 1993 breakthrough peace deal.

According to that agreement, Israel is to redeploy away from populated Palestinian areas, which include major cities and villages, but not from Jewish settlements and military sites.

Officials say the West Bank could end up looking like a complex mosaic as the two sides define boundaries around each town and village, settlement and main road where three different kinds of security arrangements are to apply.

"We will discuss the territorial spheres and will try to finalise the transfer of eight economic spheres, and believe we have very hard work ahead of us," Mr. Qourie said.

During his Hebron tour Monday, Mr. Rabin was

accompanied by Mr. Peres and the West Bank's army commander, Major Gen. Ilan Biran.

Mr. Rabin's spokeswoman, Aliza Goren, said the group visited military installations. Israel Radio said Mr. Rabin also visited the Ibrahim Mosque where a Jewish settler shot and killed at least 30 Muslim worshippers in February 1994.

The site, sacred to Muslims and Jews, is a site of frequent friction between Israelis and Palestinians.

On Sunday, a leading member of Mr. Rabin's cabinet said Jewish settlers should be evacuated from Hebron, suggesting that otherwise it would be impossible to keep Israel's pledge to withdraw its soldiers from Palestinian towns in the West Bank.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Palestinian students demonstrated Monday for a third straight day against the presence of Jewish settlers outside their schools in East Jerusalem.

A dozen armed Israelis have camped day and night outside the unofficial Palestinian headquarters, which stands in the same street as three schools and the settlers want closed down.

The students, supported by parents and teachers, shouted slogans such as "Rabin's peace is false" and "Throw out the settlers."

"Let us learn in peace," read one placard in Arabic, Hebrew and English.

Israeli security forces did not intervene.

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Jordan to push bid to be base for MENAFIO

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian officials on Monday appeared to take in stride reports that a proposed Middle East development bank will be based in Cairo but said the Kingdom would press its quest to host a related institution that would be to identifying projects.

Some of the officials and other sources said the United States and Egypt appeared to have made a secret deal under which the proposed bank will be headquartered in Cairo.

However, it also appeared that Jordan was none too anxious to host the bank either, given that the proposed entity would be granting loans at commercial interest rates for development projects and concessionary credits, if any, would be too selective and limited.

But Jordan is determined to realize its quest to have a related institution, the Middle East and North Africa Financial Intermediary Organisation (MENAFIO), said an official.

"We don't really care where the proposed bank is located, but we would definitely want to host MENAFIO, or whatever you want to call it," said the official, who did not want to be identified.

It is expected to serve as an interim body for two years in identifying projects that are of optimum benefit to the regional parties as well as projects that are of national nature for the countries involved.

However, there is no agreement yet whether MENAFIO should be automatically become the proposed development bank at the end of the two years or continue its functions.

Several European and Gulf countries argue that

(Continued on page 7)

Assad's comments 'disappoint' Peres

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres voiced disappointment on Monday at what he said was Syrian President Hafez Al Assad's "pessimistic tone"

on peace moves and his refusal to enter into high-level talks.

Mr. Peres told reporters he has confused by Mr. Assad's statement at a Cairo news conference on Sunday that higher-level talks demanded by Israel would block the road to peace.

"There was a disappointment yesterday in the appearance of Assad both because of his pessimistic tone and also because of one answer which was a bit strange," Mr. Peres said.

When they asked him why don't you raise the level of the negotiations to a higher level, he said this is the disease and not the cure. And I didn't understand why it is a disease."

Mr. Peres — in an apparent reference to peace deals with Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians — said that past agreements were achieved through negotiations not only

on the military level but also at the highest political levels.

"I don't see any reason why something so normal and accepted in the world will not happen between Syria and us," Mr. Peres said.

Four years of low-level talks are stuck. Damascus demands Israel return all of the Golan Heights seized in 1967. Israel says it is willing to pull back but won't say how far until Syria commits itself to full normal ties.

A parliamentary official said Mr. Peres told a closed-door committee meeting earlier that Israel's attempt to raise the level of negotiations with Syria had been turned down.

The official told reporters Mr. Peres negotiations with Syria were stalled in part because Damascus had failed to keep its agreement to hold talks between senior military officers.

Mr. Peres said another problem was that Syria was insisting the sides had agreed to remove Israeli warning stations for the Golan from the agenda.

Iraqi exiles want peaceful change at top

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iraqi opponents including three former ministers called on politicians and army chiefs to take advantage of internal upheaval in Baghdad to bring about a peaceful change in government.

The Iraqi Consultative Committee said in a statement that leading Iraqi and Arab figures met in Vienna at the weekend to discuss developments in Baghdad following the Aug. 8 defection to Jordan of two top officials.

The group's statement was signed by former Foreign Minister Adnan Badgadi, former Industry Minister Adib Al Jader and Abdul Ghani Al Dali, ex-agriculture minister.

The former director general of the Iraqi Oil Ministry, Fadel Al Jabri, also signed.

They described as a "great

turning point" the defections of General Hussein Kamel, ex-industry minister, his brother and their wives, both daughters of President Saddam Hussein.

"They reveal for the first time the contradictions at the heart of the regime as a prelude to its collapse," the opposition group said.

"For members of the (ruling) Baath Party and the armed forces they represent a chance to take part in a national effort to bring about peaceful change which would save the country from bloodshed and foreign interference."

The statement called for a democratic, multi-party system in Iraq and a government which put an end to political oppression and respected its international commitments and the rights of Kurds.

It also urged measures to boost Iraq's economy, which has been crippled by five years of U.N. sanctions, and to improve relations with its neighbours "in order to free Iraq from the fall-out of the (1980-1988) war with Iran and the invasion of Kuwait" in 1990.

Gen. Kamel Hassan meanwhile denied that he planned to put his views to a meeting of opposition groups in London.

Gen. Kamel is "not involved" in the meeting on Saturday and "will not present his political programme there," said his cousin Izzedin Mohammad Hassan, who defected with him.

Meshaaq Juburi, representing a powerful tribe that was once a pillar of the Iraqi government, told AFP earlier that Gen. Kamel would send

the two powers that attract the "straying horses" in the jungle of the American wolf," Iraq's state-run Al Jamhouriya newspaper said in an editorial.

"The existence of a common enemy... which is the West, provides us with two options... the tactics cooperation option if strategic cooperation is impossible."

"The second option is based on agreeing on common essential points, foremost of which is confronting attempts to annihilate the Muslims and protecting their interests, values and principles."

The editorial, marking the 15th anniversary of the start of the 1980-88 Iraq-Iran war, was carried by the official Iraqi News Agency.

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Dancers and singers perform during the Chinese government's official welcoming ceremony for the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing (AFP photo)

2 Home & Middle East News

Israel sends envoy to Cairo to calm war crime dispute

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel dispatched Deputy Foreign Minister Elie Dayan to Cairo on Monday to try to bolster relations amid a storm over the killing of Egyptian prisoners of war (PoWs).

"We hope that prisoner of war issue will not damage relations," said Mr. Dayan, who was to meet Foreign Minister Amr Musa later in the day.

"If there was criminal behaviour it was by individuals and not deliberate policy," Mr. Dayan told state radio. "And anyway terrible things were done by both sides."

He pointed out that under Israeli law soldiers guilty of war crimes cannot be prosecuted more than 20 years after the events.

Mr. Dayan renewed an appeal in the Egyptian government "to condemn and to deny" an article in a Cairo newspaper which accused Israel's Ambassador David Sultan of killing around 100 Arab prisoners of war.

The radio said Foreign Minister Shimon Peres had instructed his deputy to "go on the offensive" by pointing out that Egyptian soldiers had also committed atrocities.

Reports first emerged in Israel last month of the massacre of up to 900 Egyptian prisoners who had surrendered their arms in the 1956 Suez campaign and 1967 Middle East war.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak called on Israel to prosecute those responsible.

Israeli historian Aryeh Yitzhaki, who first revealed the massacres, also urged Mr. Mubarak to investigate the execution of more than 80 Israeli prisoners in Egyptian camps during the 1973 Middle East war.

"The intention is to tell the Egyptians that in the past both sides did things which should not have been done, but these were acts of individuals, not the policy of the governments, and that we must learn from the mistakes of the past, and not let them harm relations in the present," said Dayan aide Yitzhak Avigad.

Islamist leader to stand for Algerian presidency

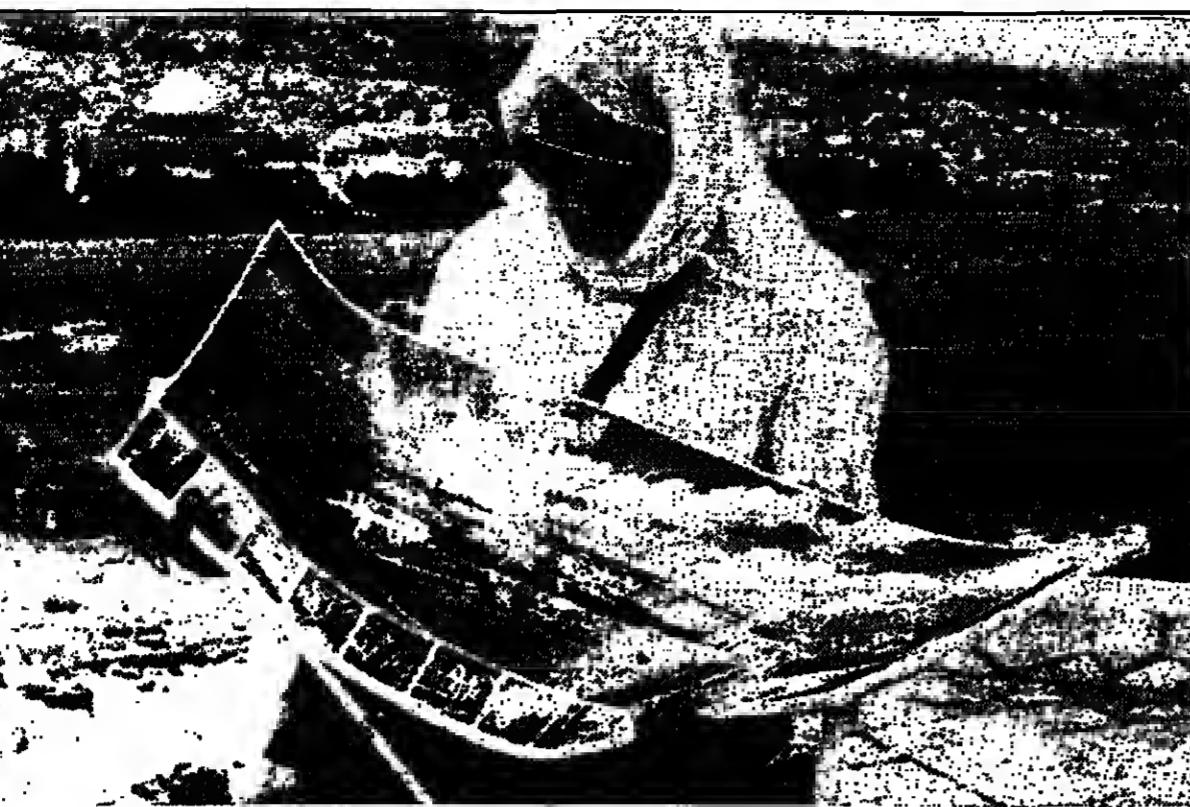
PARIS (R) — A moderate Islamist leader and arch-enemy of hardline Muslim fundamentalists has said he would stand in Algeria's presidential poll on Nov. 16.

Mohammed Nahmeh, who is opposed both by militants waging war against the army-backed authorities and by the main secular political parties, told a press conference in Algiers that his Islamic society movement has endorsed his candidacy.

But he is seen as one of the few politicians who can stride over the first poll hurdle of gaining 75,000 supporters' signatures in order to qualify as a candidate.

His party, known by its Arab acronym Hamas, is believed to have more than 250,000 supporters.

At least 12 other politicians, including former Prime



HOLY CITY: A blind Palestinian holds up for sale a panorama photograph of Jerusalem with the real view of the Holy City and the Golden Dome of the Rock behind him. On Monday, Israel launched what it considers as the 3,000th anniversary of Jerusalem (see page 12) (AFP photo)

Films against militants prove box office smash

CAIRO (AFP) — Films and TV soaps critical of militants are proving a smash hit in Egypt both at the box office and with television audiences.

"If the overriding theme of cinema in the 1970s was political corruption, which turned to the emergence of new social classes in the 1980s, now its focus is terrorism by Islamists," director Wahid Hamed told AFP.

"Belly-dancers, formerly the centre of Egyptian films, have given way to veiled women, while the seductive hero has been dethroned by bearded 'emirs' (militant leaders) and Islamist lawyers," Mr. Hamed said.

Love scenes have been replaced by action shots such as fires in video stores, hold-ups in jewelers shops or attacks on policemen and writers.

Mr. Hamed wrote the screenplay for "Birds of Darkness" which has swept the country since it opened two weeks ago and is showing on 20 screens.

It stars Egypt's most

popular comedian Adel Imam, who began the wave of anti-Islamist films with his 1993 "Terrorism and Barbecue" and "The Terrorist" a year later.

Such films are "a very strong weapon against terrorism. In a country where half the population is illiterate, films and television are better at informing the public than news bulletins and articles," Mr. Hamed said.

The authorities, who keep a tight grip on the Egyptian media, have welcomed the trend and given it scope to act freely.

Censors allowed "Birds of Darkness" to tell the story of a corrupt minister who wins a parliament election by striking a deal with Islamic activists.

The government also gave Mr. Imam unprecedented access to police and army equipment during his last three films, to such an extent that some critics accuse him of "selling out" to government propaganda.

Officials have also opened the door to a flurry

of anti-Islamist soap operas and series. "The Family," written by Mr. Hamed, was the first and has proved the most successful along with the latest, "Escaping the Crisis."

"Egyptian television will continue to produce works which condemn the practices of the extremists which are wrong and contrary to the spirit of tolerance in Islam," Information Minister Safwat Al Ousheiri said.

"These works have encouraged the population to help security services in their fight against fundamentalists," he said.

The confrontation between police and Muslim militants seeking to overthrow the government has left about 860 people dead since March 1992.

But critics say the image of Islamic activists in television shows is often "superficial and unrealistic," according to Essam Bessila, from the daily Al-Akhbar.

He said one series, "Arms and Illusion," shown since July could

have "the opposite of the intended effect."

The series was inspired by events in the Cairo slum of Imbaba, a fiefdom of the Islamists in the early 1990s, until security forces invaded the neighbourhood late 1992.

Muslim extremists have responded angrily to the new trend. Last year they issued death threats against the director of "The Terrorist," Nader Galal, and last week they condemned Sarwat Al Ousheiri, the director of "Escaping the Crisis."

But directors and actors have sworn to "continue the battle."

"My wife insisted at first that I should not play in 'The Terrorist,'" Mr. Imam has said. "But when she saw the corpse of a little girl killed in the (failed) assassination attempt against Prime Minister Atef Sedki" in October 1993 "she pushed me into it," he said.

"I am a true Muslim and I will wipe out terrorism by continuing to make people laugh," Mr. Imam said.

Cyprus murder case stalls on fingerprints

LARNACA, Cyprus (R) — An army spade allegedly used by three British soldiers to kill a tour guide on the holiday island of Cyprus bears no fingerprints of the accused killers, a witness told a court on Monday.

Inspector Aristophanes Charalambous, head of the fingerprints section of Cyprus police, testified that a spade listed by prosecutors as the murder weapon had no fingerprints on it at all.

British serviceman Alan Ford, 26, Justin Fowler, 27, and Jeff Pernell, 23, 20, beat a Danish tour guide Louise Jensen to death with the shovel found in their beach buggy when they were arrested close to military base nearly a year ago.

Ben Baz urges Muslims to boycott women conference

DUBAI (Agencies) — Saudi Arabia's leading cleric made Muslims should boycott the U.N. Fourth Conference on Women because some items on the agenda were contrary to Islamic principles and promoted obscenity.

Gulf News agencies said Abdul Aziz Ben Baz made his statement on Sunday night, two days after a similar statement by the Higher Council of Ulama, which he heads.

The Council of Experts is the highest religious authority in Saudi Arabia, where strict Islamic laws are applied.

Sheikh Ben Baz was quoted as saying Muslims should boycott the conference, which opened in Beijing on Monday, "because its agenda includes decisions that contradict Islam."

He said the conference is working to "eliminate laws that differentiate between men and women... and calls for obscenity through practising safe sex, extra-marital sex and educating young men and women about sexual issues."

He said the aims of the conference include "stripping humanity of its dignity."

Conservatives, including the Vatican and a number of Islamic states, oppose some of the language of a draft "platform for action" to be debated at the conference, notably those parts dealing with contraception and abortion.

Saudi Arabia did not send delegates to the conference. Sheikh Ben Baz, in a message broadcast on state radio, appealed to Muslim leaders "to take a united stand against this aggression that targets Muslims."

Sheikh Ben Baz added that the document also expresses "atheistic principles, such as one calling for the abrogation of laws making a distinction between men and women on the grounds that religion prevents equality between the sexes."

The Council of the Ulemas also charged in a statement issued Sunday the working document authorises "immoral acts" and aims to destroy family life.

JORDAN TIMES, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1995

.NEWS IN BRIEF

More Israelis favour Golan pullout

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A growing number of Israelis support a withdrawal from the strategic Golan Heights in exchange for peace with Syria, although they remain in the minority, a poll showed Monday. Thirty per cent of Israeli Jews interviewed support a complete withdrawal from the Golan in exchange for security guarantees and diplomatic relations with Syria, compared to 23 per cent in December 1994, a poll by the Modin Ezrahi institute said. The number opposed to a total withdrawal has fallen 10 points, from 64 to 54 per cent, according to the poll, conducted for Bar Ilan University's strategic studies centre. The poll of 1,233 Jewish adults was conducted last month.

Iran says pilgrim flights to resume

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said on Monday flights carrying Iranians on pilgrimage to Mecca were resuming after being stopped last month. The official Iranian news agency IRNA said the flights, from Tehran and six other cities, were to start on Monday "after a one-month suspension" to carry 72,000 Iranians wanting to perform Umrah. The flights were "suspended because of the Saudi government not issuing visa for the pilgrims," the agency said. Iran said last month Saudi Arabia also refused to issue permits for the flights. Saudi Arabia and Iran have been at odds about the nature of Hajj, which attracts up to two million Muslims from around the world. While Riyadh says that the pilgrimage is a religious affair that should not be politicised, Tehran insists that it rallies denouncing what it calls enemies of Islam — the United States and Israel — should be held during Hajj.

Iranian 'messenger' sentenced to death

DUBAI (AFP) — An Iranian national proclaiming himself the "messenger of God" has been sentenced to death in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Iran's General Consul Rahim Abedan Zadeh said here Monday. Hassan Ghulam Husseini Dana, 35-year-old trader, was convicted of apostasy on Aug. 2 by Islamic criminal court of Sharjah. Mr. Dana proclaimed himself "messenger of God" for the first time in September 1994 during a trial by the same court, which had accused him with two other men of embezzlement, Mr. Zadeh said, adding that he repeated his claim later in jail. The court did not say when Mr. Dana would be executed. Mr. Zadeh confirmed that an Iranian religious scholar had visited Mr. Dana to talk him into repenting. A newspaper here, Al Khaleej, said the court had given Mr. Dana ten months to "repent and reenter the righteous path," but he insisted on being "messenger of God even if given ten years."

Iranian 'messenger' sentenced to death

ABU DHABI (AFP) — British Energy Secretary Tim Eggar arrived in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Monday for talks on energy cooperation and the world oil market. British embassy officials said. The officials gave no further details of the visit, which followed criticism by Gulf states and other oil producers after Britain increased oil output from its North Sea fields. The 12-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) has blamed Britain, Norway and other independent oil producers for weak crude prices, which have remained nearly four dollars below OPEC's target of \$21. British Petroleum is a key shareholder in Abu Dhabi's energy sector along with the French Total and the Japan Oil Development Company. The official news agency WAM said Mr. Eggar was met by former Oil Minister Yousef Omar Ben Yousef, director of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and secretary general of the Supreme Petroleum Council, which runs the emirate's energy sector. The UAE is the third biggest producer in OPEC, with an output quota of 2.16 million barrels per day.

Kuwait foils 'infiltration' attempts

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait has foiled several infiltration attempts by sea, the interior minister told Monday's Al Watan newspaper. Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah did not specify where the infiltrators came from, but said that there was "no need for concern." Kuwait often reports infiltration attempts by Iranians and Iraqis, most of them seeking work in the oil-rich Gulf country. He also said there "has been no change" on the northern border with Iraq, and that Kuwait continues to monitor "closely" the situation there. Some 1,400 U.S. soldiers began last Wednesday war games in the Kuwaiti desert in a bid to deter Iraq from launching any attack on the emirate. Kuwaiti troops are to join the manoeuvres by mid-September.

Greece protests use of name 'Macedonia' in Beijing

ATHENS (AFP) — The Greek delegation to the World Conference of Women has protested to the United Nations about the use of the name "Macedonia" to refer to delegations from that country, the Greek press reported Monday. In a letter to the United Nations Saturday, the head of the Greek delegation Maria Arsenise reproached the organising committee for having referred to the delegation from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as "Macedonian." She stressed that "there is no state at the United Nations under the name of Macedonia." The matter has been a sensitive issue for Greece since the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. Athens is refusing to recognise the former Yugoslav republic under the name of Macedonia, which it considers as part of the Greek national heritage. In 1993, the United Nations recognised it under the name "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia." But Greece has imposed an economic blockade against its neighbour since February 1994 and Washington is trying to convince the two sides to resume U.S.-brokered negotiations, deadlocked over the parties' refusal to make concessions.

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple	600/401
Banana	680
Banana (Mukhamar)	620
Cabbage	140 / 80
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Carrot	240/180
Cucumber (large)	50 / 100
Cucumber (small)	200 / 100
Eggplant	300/250
Figs	370/250
Garlic	700/500
Grapes	750/600
Guava	800/600
Lemon	380/300
Marrow (large)	250 / 150
Marrow (small)	420 / 320
Milk	180 / 100
Ora	800 / 700
Onion (dry)	240 / 180
Peaches	450/350
Pepper (hot)	200 / 100
Pepper (sweet)	200 / 100
Pomegranate	350/250
Potato	240 / 150
String Beans	680 / 500
Sweet Melon	330 / 250
Tomato	140/80
Water Melon	200 / 150

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:30 ... Damascus, Paris (AF)

06:45 ... Beirut (ME)

09:45 ... Cairo (MS)

12:45 ... Amsterdam, Tel Aviv (RJ)

13:00 ... Geneva, Brussels (GF)

13:10 ... Paris (RJ)

13:10 ... Cairo, Alexandria (RJ)

14:45 ... Madrid (RJ)

21:00 ... Istanbul (RJ)

21:20 ... Jeddah (RJ)

21:45 ... Bahrain, Doha (RJ)

21:45 ... Damascus (RJ)

21:45 ... Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)

22:20 ... Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

22:30 ... Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20 ... Vienna (OS)

09:45 ... Cairo (MS)

13:40 ... Ahu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)

14:00 ... Munich (YP)

14:00 ...

Strike shuts down Karachi

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP) — A militant ethnic group shut down Pakistan's largest city of Karachi Monday with a strike to protest alleged police abuses of female activists.

At least eight people were killed overnight and Monday in strike-related violence, police said.

Among the dead was a plainclothes police officer, who was taken off a bus late Sunday by unidentified gunmen and executed, witnesses said.

A fellow officer, who was travelling with him, was taken by the gunmen and has not been seen since.

The killings occurred despite a government order to Karachi Security Forces to shoot on sight anyone carrying a weapon or disturbing the peace.

The order, issued late Sun-

day by Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar, was strongly condemned by the Mohajir Qaumi Movement, the group that called the strike.

"No individual minister has the right to make his own laws ... It is an incentive to kill people. It's the law of the jungle," Shoaib Bokhari, MQM spokesman, told the Associated Press.

Karachi, a hustling port city of 12 million people, was completely closed Monday. The Karachi Stock Exchange and financial institutions remained closed.

Operations at the Arabian Sea port ground to a halt and the usually teeming streets were largely deserted.

Police and rangers patrolled the more violent neighbourhoods in central and west Karachi in armoured personnel carriers

and jeeps mounted with machineguns.

In several neighbourhoods boys set at least 10 vehicles on fire, including a passenger bus, police said. In central Liaqatabad and Western Orangi neighbourhoods young men with guns roamed the narrow lanes firing at police patrols and hiding.

Gunmen attacked a police patrol in central Karachi, injuring two officers, police said. Another three members of the security force were injured in separate firing incidents.

Strikes have become a regular means of protest for the MQM, which represents Indian Muslims who settled in Pakistan after independence in 1947. They say the government discriminates against Mohajirs, denying them access to good jobs

and educational institutions. MQM leaders say Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government is trying to crush the organisation, her biggest political opposition in Karachi.

Police blame much of the violence in Karachi in recent months on the largest faction of the MQM, led by Altaf Hussain, who lives in Britain. At least 1,300 people have been killed so far this year.

In recent weeks police and rangers have been conducting house-to-house searches in some of the hardest hit areas looking for weapons and militants.

International human rights groups and residents have accused the police of using excessive force, illegally detaining young men and taking bribes before releasing them.

Bangladeshi police use shotguns to disperse clashing pro-strike and anti-strike groups in Dhaka at the end of a 32-hour nationwide work stoppage (AFP photo)

Bangladesh women activists criticise Zia for ignoring rape, killing of girl

DHAKA (AFP) — Several hundred women in a rally here Monday criticised Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia for taking part in the Beijing U.N. World Conference on Women while ignoring the alleged rape and killing of a girl by police last week.

"She (Zia) should not attend the conference and speak about the empowerment of women while keeping the women of her own country insecure and vulnerable," said activist Farida Akhter.

She said Mrs Zia should have cancelled the trip to take action against those responsible for the girl's death.

Yasmin Akhter, 14, was allegedly raped and killed by police in northern Dinajpur district last week. A government probe is under way after seven more people were killed in anti-police demonstrations.

Three policemen allegedly involved in the incident have been arrested and top district officials were transferred.

Mrs Zia, Bangladesh's first woman premier, currently in Beijing, has not yet commented on the incident.

"The Dinajpur incident was not a separate one, rather it was the continuation of police atrocities against innocent people, especially women," said

Khushi Kabir, chairman of the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh.

No legal bar in Bangladesh prevented women from being arrested anywhere or anytime, Ms. Kabir said.

It was unfortunate that women had to take to the streets to demand punishment of those who were supposed to provide security, Ms. Kabir added.

Rally participants also demanded the resignation of Bangladeshi Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury for alleged inaction.

Britain, Ireland meet on N. Irish peace deadlock

DUBLIN (R) — The British and Irish governments held crunch talks Monday to defuse crisis over the decommissioning of IRA guerrilla arms which has brought their year-old Northern Ireland peace drive to a standstill.

Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring and Britain's Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, met in Dublin at the start of a crucial week for Anglo-Irish efforts to convene all-party talks on a lasting political settlement.

Neither minister made any comments to waiting reporters.

Sir Patrick was then due to travel to the Northern Ireland capital Belfast for a meeting with Gerry Adams, president of the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) political

wing Sinn Fein.

The meetings are supposed to lay the groundwork for an Anglo-Irish summit in Britain Wednesday at which new proposals to breathe life into the peace process are expected to be unveiled.

But there are signs they will run into stiff opposition from Sinn Fein, which seeks to end British rule of Northern Ireland, because they may seek to get the IRA to disarm before Britain convenes talks on a political settlement.

Mr. Adams said at the weekend there was no way the IRA would contemplate handing over weapons used in a 25-year war against Britain and repeated his call for a date to be set for all-party talks.

But Britain says no political group can come to the

conference table as long as it has an army of supporters still in possession of weapons it might use to resume its war if the discussions founder.

Irish officials say British Prime Minister John Major and his Irish counterpart John Bruton will establish an international commission Wednesday to oversee the surrender of IRA and Protestant loyalist weapons.

But Mr. Adams has made clear there will be no point in establishing such a body if its brief is to take IRA arms out of service before all-party talks are launched.

George Mitchell, a former U.S. senator who heads President Bill Clinton's Ireland economy advisory team, is expected to head the commission and involve Washington directly in the

peace process for the first time.

Sources close to the peace process said the Dublin government believes a commitment by the IRA not to use its arsenal first or for any reason other than self-defence might help break the peace process log-jam.

Protestant loyalist gunmen, who fought for 25 years to keep Northern Ireland British, made a similar pledge this month and have called on their IRA rivals to do likewise.

The rival guerrillas called ceasefires last year which have led to 12 months of rare peace but little real progress towards reconciling Protestant determination to keep Northern Ireland British and Catholic dreams of a re-united Ireland.

Mr. Adams said at the weekend there was no way the IRA would contemplate handing over weapons used in a 25-year war against Britain and repeated his call for a date to be set for all-party talks.

But Britain says no political group can come to the

U.N. refugee chief flies to Rwanda for talks on refugees

DAR ES SALAAM (R) — U.N. refugee chief Sadako Ogata, baving little luck in resolving the problem of bringing home Rwandan refugees, flew to Rwanda Monday after Tanzania hinted it might forcibly remove them from its soil.

Mrs. Ogata, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, (UNHCR), left for Kigali on the fourth leg of a tour to Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania, Rwanda and Zaire undertaken after Zaire tried to throw out refugees there last month.

Tanzanian Prime Minister Cleopha Msuya, meeting Mrs. Ogata Monday, turned down her appeal for the country to reopen its borders with Rwanda and Burundi.

"Tanzania has made its position very clear and though she does not approve there is a mutual understanding," UNHCR representa-

tive Andrew Sokira told Reuters.

"We want the international community to work towards the return of the refugees to their countries of origin as quickly as possible," Defence Minister Abdulrahman Kinana said after meeting Mrs. Ogata Sunday.

Mr. Msuya also made a veiled threat that Tanzania would follow the Zairean example of expelling refugees. The deportations stopped after 15,000 refugees were thrown out of eastern Zaire.

"We hope we shall not be pushed into a corner and be forced to use crude methods," Mr. Msuya was quoted by his office as saying.

The issue was indirectly broached and Madame Ogata was told that, though Tanzania wants a quick solution to the problem, it is a civilised nation which

would not rush into anything," a U.N. official said.

Tanzania says it cannot indefinitely continue to give asylum to the 712,000 Rwandan and Burundian refugees in camps in the west of the country near the borders with Rwanda and Burundi.

Tanzania blames the refugees for insecurity and many crimes, including the murder of more than 80 Tanzanians, and in March shut its borders with Rwanda and Burundi to stop more crossing.

Many are Rwandan Hutus who fled during last year's civil war and say they fear being killed in reprisal for the genocide of up to a million Tutsis and Hutu moderates if they return.

In Kigali, Mrs. Ogata was expected to seek renewed assurances from Rwanda's government that would speed the return of refugees. She is also scheduled to visit camps in eastern Zaire.

Solemn services mark 50th anniversary of World War II's end

HONOLULU (AP) — Paying a final tribute to America's aging warriors, President Clinton attended solemn religious services Sunday in a prayerful search for lessons of "the tragedy of World War II."

In surprisingly brief remarks capping V-J Day commemorations, Mr. Clinton said historians looking back centuries from now will say the war showed that people will reject repression and prejudice to fight for freedom.

"I believe the lesson will be that people, when given a choice, will not choose to live under empire; that citizens, when given a choice, will not choose to live under dictators; that people, when given the opportunity to let the better angles of their natures rise to the top, will not embrace theories of political or racial or ethnic or religious superiority," he said.

On a day filled with hymns and hallelujahs, Mr. Clinton spoke for less than five minutes — allowing the poignant words of veterans to resonate.

The president and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton parted after the services.

Mr. Clinton headed to California for a two-day trip. Mrs. Clinton left for China, where she will address an international women's conference.

Both trips are heavy with political implications. Mr. Clinton's 26th trip to California marks a new stage in his re-election campaign, with a heavy travel schedule ahead this fall.

Mr. Clinton hopes to spotlight women's rights issues in China, while delicately avoiding a confrontation with the Communist regime. Aides hope the trip pays dividends domestically; women are a huge voting bloc that favoured Mr. Clinton in 1992.

During the Sunday commemorative ceremony, participants delivered moving speeches, listened to Buddhist and Hawaiian prayers and sang "Amazing Grace" and "America The Beautiful" in the hillside amphitheatre lined by palm trees. More than 2,500 people attended the non-denominational services, held in steamy weather at the Waikiki Band Shell.

Col. Harry Fukuhara, a Japanese immigrant in U.S. Army Intelligence during

World War II had two brothers in Japanese suicide units as the war drew to a close. Their mission — never carried out — targeted sites near Fukuhara's unit.

The wrinkled war hero told a hushed crowd, "thanks to a higher power, meeting my two brothers on the battlefield was avoided."

Sen. Howell Heflin, a decorated World War II veteran, read from the Bible, then concluded: "The prayer of the veterans of World War II is there will never be a World War III."

The service marked the end of several years of World War II observances. Former President George Bush came to Pearl Harbour on Dec. 7, 1991, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack that brought the United States into the war.

Mr. Clinton, the first president born after World War II, travelled to Normandy, France, last year to celebrate D-Day, the landing of allied forces that led to the end of the war in Europe. And last May 9, Mr. Clinton went to Red Square in Moscow for a Victory Day tribute to the 27 million Soviets who died defeating Nazi Germany.

A variety of protesters, many of whom opposed nuclear testing in France, sang and chanted behind fences at the back of the outdoor theatre, creating a minor disturbance for people in the last rows of the service.

What was left of his inundated home. He also said he was afraid of disease from crowded evacuation centres.

The helicopters and trucks are picking people from the roofs of their houses. Many do not want to leave their belongings behind," Emma Tabalanza of the regional disaster relief office in Bacolod told reporters.

Bacolod residents said the first mudflows began to appear around 9 p.m. (1300 GMT) Sunday evening and eight hours later had reached a depth of two metres.

They said the torrent was the worst of a series of mudflows from Pinatubo since it erupted in 1991 in one of the century's biggest volcanic explosions.

"This is the worst," said Jaime Pallaniqui, 46. Mr. Pallaniqui said he had refused to be evacuated fearing people would plunder

through the country. Worst hit was the town of Bacolod, home to around 20,000. Only the rooftops of some houses were visible.

"These people just do not want to leave Bacolod," Mr. Tabalanza said.

The weather bureau warned that more rains were likely with Nina due to slice across the main Philippine island of Luzon later Monday.

"Heavy rains will fall on Pinatubo volcano so we are warning people to leave dangerous areas," a forecaster said.

The mudflows have become an annual rainy season ordeal for people living around Pinatubo. Scientists say millions of tonnes of volcanic debris remain on the volcano's flanks.

Heavy rain loosens the still hot debris, sending it crashing down onto nearby communities.

Hurricane Luis bears down on Caribbean

LONG GROUND, Montserrat (R) — Residents of this tiny island, who spent the past seven weeks living with the threat of a deadly volcanic eruption, prepared Monday to face an even more lethal foe, hurricane Luis and its screaming 140 mph (225 kph) winds.

Luis, the most powerful hurricane to emerge in the busiest season in decades, was expected to lash Montserrat and the neighbouring Caribbean islands beginning late Monday night, according to the National Hurricane Centre in Miami.

At 11 p.m. EDT (0300 GMT Monday), Luis was located 571 kilometres east of the Leeward Islands and was churning due west at 14 mph (22 kph). Hurricane centre forecasters said.

Residents of Antigua, Montserrat and the other Leeward Islands swung into action, boarding up windows,

dows, fuelling cars and stockpiling canned goods and drinking water.

Most needed little encouragement, remembering only too well the devastation wrought by similar-sized hurricane Hugo in 1989. Hugo was blamed for the deaths of more than two dozen Caribbean residents. It caused billions of dollars worth of damage to tourist hotels, private homes and businesses. The storm roared across a half-dozen islands before turning north to hit South Carolina.

On Montserrat, Hugo destroyed more than 95 per cent of the island's homes, where some 12,000 residents live.

The path of hurricane Luis was a cruel blow to a tiny British colony known for its verdant landscapes, peaceful lifestyle, and proud but friendly people.

Yawn, I've never had so much fun

LONDON (R) — An anti-depressant drug is giving patients an uplifting bonus — when they yawn, they have an orgasm. British newspapers quoted a scientific study published in the latest edition of New Scientist magazine. The report said five per cent of patients taking the drug Clomipramine had noticed the side-effect, which had also been noticed by people taking another drug, Prozac, even though the normal effect of both drugs is to inhibit sexual desire. The discovery could herald a new era in sexual relationships, the newspapers said.

American dancer wins award

EDINBURGH, Scotland (R) — American dancer Mark Morris has won the 1995 Hamada Award, set up as top prize for artistic excellence at the Edinburgh Festival by a mysterious Japanese businessman who has since disappeared without trace. Morris and his troupe have been a sell-out success at the Edinburgh Festival for three years running. The Scotsman newspaper provides a judging panel for the award, named for a Japanese businessman who set up the Hamada Foundation with a £500,000 (\$775,800) cash gift. A regular festival visitor for many years, Zenya Hamada has not been seen since the 1993 awards luncheon.

Swimming ritual attracts 10,000 Taiwanese

TAIPEI (R) — More than 10,000 Taiwanese swam across the island's scenic Sun Moon Lake in a time-honoured ritual to celebrate the upcoming Chinese mid-autumn festival, or the Moon Festival, an organiser said. Participants aged between six and 84 took part in the mass swim across the four-kilometre mountain lake in the central county of Nantou, an organiser said by telephone. The activity is held every year in the Sun Moon Lake before the mid-autumn festival, one of the most important Chinese festivals, on the 15th day of the lunar month of August. It falls on Sept. 9 this year.

Sally Field wants more clout for women

HUAIROU, China (AP) — Sally Field says working with poor women and children in Nepal has made her think twice about her priorities. The actress told the world's biggest women's conference in China Sunday that she'll keep crusading for more clout for women in Hollywood, even though her recent humanitarian work has made that fight seem less important. "How can I talk about women in film now?" said the two-time Academy Award winner. "It seems such a great luxury to be able to talk about the arts." Field, who was in Nepal for the Save the Children charity, spoke to participants at a non-governmental gathering paralleling the United Nations' fourth World Conference on Women.

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World News

Powell turned down CIA spot under Bush, considered as Clinton's partner

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Retired General Colin Powell says in his new book that he turned down offers to be George Bush's CIA director and was approached as a possible running mate for Bill Clinton in 1992, Newsweek magazine said.

The autobiography My American Journey does not provide any clues as to whether Gen. Powell will run — as an independent or a Republican — for the presidency in 1996, according to Newsweek. But the book, which is scheduled to arrive on the shelves next week, underscores how hot a political property Gen. Powell has been regarded by both parties.

In 1992, he was asked to consider being Mr. Clinton's vice presidential running mate and was twice

approached about becoming his secretary of state.

White House spokesman Michael McCurry acknowledged, but downplayed overtures that then-candidate and later president Mr. Clinton made to Gen. Powell.

"Obviously, these are very

tentative personal discussions

and apparently Gen. Powell has felt free to write

about that," Mr. McCurry said.

"That's his right as an American."

Gen. Powell, 58, was serving

as commander of the joint

chiefs of staff in 1992

and left the position the following

year to begin his retirement.

According to Newsweek, which

obtained a copy of the 613-page book, President-elect George Bush offered

Gen. Powell the Central

Intelligence Agency's (CIA)

director slot, but the general turned it down.

A poll published by the

news magazine found that
Gen. Powell would come in
third with 21 per cent of the
vote if he were to run as an
independent against Mr. Clinton and Senate majority
leader Bob Dole. Under
such a scenario, Mr. Clinton
would win with 36 per cent
of the vote and Sen. Dole
would take 33 per cent.

But if Gen. Powell ran as
the Republican candidate, he
would defeat Mr. Clinton by
as much as 10 percentage
points, the poll found.

He also would help Sen.
Dole to a 51-44 per cent victory

over Mr. Clinton and
Mr. Gore if he ran as the
Republicans' vice presidential
candidate.

Gen. Powell has planned a

25-city tour to promote the
\$35 book.

Kashmir rebels kill 13 in car bomb

SRINAGAR, India (R) — Kashmir separatists detonated a car bomb in Srinagar Monday, killing at least 13 people in an audacious attack in the centre of the heavily fortified city, witnesses said.

The Hizbul Mujaheddin guerrilla group claimed responsibility in a telephone call to a Western news agency and said the bomb was aimed at Indian soldiers outside a bank in the city centre.

Witnesses said five of the dead appeared to be soldiers.

Officials at the government-run hospital where casualties were brought said 20 wounded were admitted, and three were in surgery. One died on arrival.

The bomb went off in a car near a police station and outside a branch of the government-owned State Bank of India, where Indian soldiers fighting the separatist insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir congregate at the beginning of every month to col-

lect their pay.

A bomb placed on a scooter in almost exactly the same location in late 1992 killed two people and shopkeepers had been pressing authorities for payments to the soldiers to be made elsewhere.

The explosion was just down the road from Abdoo's, one of the only hotels left open in the city and packed full of foreign journalists covering the Kashmir hostage crisis, which entered its third month Monday.

Witnesses said there was an army truck parked in the vicinity when the bomb went off at around 1.30 p.m. (0800 GMT). Three cars and five scooters were destroyed in the blast.

The wheels had been blown off one car and the tin roofs of shops opposite were riddled with holes from the debris.

"I was going to buy food when I heard a huge explosion. The next thing I knew I was lying on the ground

with injuries to my neck and stomach," hotel worker Gbulam Qadir Khan told Reuters at the hospital where he was being treated.

"It's only the poor like me who suffer," he said.

Witnesses saw 12 bodies after the blast, two of them women and five others dressed in military uniform. Some of the corpses were badly mutilated.

Security forces arrived quickly and carried off the bodies. Police cordoned off the area saying there could be another bomb.

The blast was preceded by a grenade explosion the guerrillas said was meant to warn civilians away from the car bomb.

Police and hospital sources say more than 20,000 people have been killed in the five-year insurgency by separatist militants in Jammu and Kashmir, predominantly Hindu India's only Muslim majority state.

An unusually large number of foreign journalists,

Western diplomats and hostage crisis advisers are in Srinagar while negotiations continue to secure the release of four Western tourists held by guerrillas in the Kashmir Valley since early July.

Donald Hutchings and John Childs of the United States and Paul Wells and Keith Mangan of Britain were kidnapped by the Al-Faran guerrilla group on July 4 while trekking in the Himalayan region.

Four days later Mr. Childs

escaped and Al-Faran abducted German Dirk Hasert and Norwegian Hans Christian Ostroe. The Norwegian was found beheaded on Aug. 13.

Al-Faran, previously unknown even to Kashmiri

separatist groups, has threatened several times to kill all the hostages unless India frees at least 15 jailed militants, including three Pakistanis.

Mrs. Mandella and 20 other

South African delegates

turned up at Beijing's famed

Great Hall of the People for

a formal welcoming ceremony.

But the doors were locked

and guarded by security

guards and the group tried

unsuccessfully to force a

way inside.

They had invitations for

the elaborate ceremony in

the cavernous hall attended

by thousands of delegates

and addressed by Chinese

President Jiang Zemin.

For security reasons the

guards did not allow them to



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PEPSI

ADPRO

Sri Lanka's Tamil rebels attack huge air force base

COLONBO (R) — Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels launched mortar bombs on a sprawling air force base on the rebel-held Jaffna peninsula in the north Monday, the military said.

The Tigers attacked the strategic Palali camp, where the rebels shot down two Avro transport planes in April killing more than 100 servicemen, it said. The army's operational headquarters in Colombo confirmed the attack had taken place but said it could not release any details.

Palali is the largest military base on the Jaffna peninsula and the backbone of the armed forces' operation Leap Forward offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) launched in July.

There were no reports of casualties or damage but to reach the base the rebels must have penetrated the army's forward defence lines a three kilometres to the south.

The Tigers are fighting for a homeland in the north and east in a war that has killed more than 50,000 people since 1983.

Meanwhile the Sri Lankan government, locked in a stand-off with Tamil rebels holding civilians on a hijacked ferry, appears to be

bracing for a military showdown with the separatist guerrillas, analysts said Monday.

The Foreign Ministry put its foot down Sunday, stressing there was no chance of reopening peace talks to the LTTE's war for a Tamil homeland in the north and east.

The Tigers refused invitations to view the proposals, broke a three-month ceasefire in April and stepped up attacks.

Now ministers stress that the only way forward is to weaken the LTTE militarily to coincide with the introduction of the devolution plan, preferably by the end of the year.

The Tigers were holding about 150 people hostage after hijacking a northbound ferry a week ago and the International Committee of the Red Cross, mediating at the government's request, said Monday only that talks continued.

People travelling south from Jaffna Monday said a siege mentality appeared to be setting in. The Voice of Tiger radio was warning people not to talk about the situation in Jaffna.

Mrs. Kumaratunga, her mother, Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike and senior cabinet ministers have all been making hawkish com-

ments on chances for war and peace in Sri Lanka.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said Sunday

there was no chance of reopening peace talks with the Tigers, contradicting visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Robin Raphael, who told reporters Friday Colombo appeared keen to resume talks.

Mrs. Bandaranaike said last week that burting the LTTE militarily was the only way to force a return to the negotiating table. How can you solve any problem when you have a stubborn lot of Tigers who are blood-thirsty, she told Reuters.

The only way is to weaken them first.

Mrs. Kumaratunga said last month the only channel of communication with the LTTE was the barrel of the gun.

And Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar told reporters on Aug. 25 that the LTTE would have to lay down their arms, at least symbolically, and renounce "Eelam", their would-be homeland, before the government considered resuming peace talks.

They only know force, he said, adding that in the meantime "there has to be an application of a superior force".

enter the hall after the stipulated starting time.

"Let us in, let us in," the group chanted bringing other security guards running to the scene and the South Africans were quickly surrounded and outnumbered.

They delayed us, they took us to a wrong venue, that is why we were late, said one delegate, who blamed the bus driver. By the time we arrived they said it was not possible to enter."

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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 667171/6, 607161
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 696183

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Writers are not policemen

THE JORDAN Writers Association (JWA) is going too far in its actions against actor Hisham Yanis for visiting Israel and for contemplating together with co-actor Nabil Sawalha to show their popular theatre production "Welcome Normalisation" in Israel. JWA maintains that these contacts and visits violate its "code of honour," and threatened to take disciplinary action against Mr. Yanis which may entail his expulsion from the association.

With all due respect to JWA and its views against normalisation with Israel, we believe that this kind of perspective is contrary to the law of the land after the peace treaty with Israel was duly signed and ratified. The attempt by some trade and professional associations to override the treaty and its implications is a prescription for an unnecessary confrontation between the state and such groups. The government has already called on trade unions and associations to stick to their immediate scope of concern and to refrain from going political. While we are against curbing any freedoms or rights of any group or individual, we still believe that associations have no business making restrictions on their members in a manner that runs counter to the law of the land.

Over and above these considerations, we cannot fault Messrs. Yanis and Sawalha for visiting Israel or for even describing Israeli women as beautiful. It should not be a crime to depict women as beautiful or otherwise since above all beauty is in the eye of the beholder. There are many Arabs living in Israel enjoying Israeli citizenship, through no fault of theirs. They cannot be viewed as traitors by any stretch of the imagination. Contacting them or the people with whom they cohabit is sensible, reasonable, useful and necessary. JWA is the last Arab institution that should frown on opportunities to carry out culture and points of view to the other side. We think JWA should reconsider its policy on this issue and adopt a new code of honour that is in tune with common sense and the new realities.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON the latest Syrian moves in the Middle East political scene, a writer in Al Dustour said Monday that Damascus is motivated by the developments in Iraq and its desire to reassess its own role in the region. Saleh Qallab expressed the belief that the Syrian President has embarked on contacts with Iran and Egypt after careful calculations and deep considerations, and after ascertaining that changes in Iraq are bound to happen. Hafez Al Assad has kept silent since the defection to Jordan last month by two top Iraqi army officers, simply because he was ready for these developments, which took Syria and many other Middle Eastern players by surprise, said the writer. But, he said, Mr. Assad had been undoubtedly in close contact with Iraqi opposition groups, including army officers since 1970, and he still hopes to unify the ruling Baath parties in Syria and Iraq. No doubt Mr. Assad still considers himself the remaining godfather of the Baath Party, and should any change happen, said the writer, he would hope to have a say in it, and would like to see Syria at the forefront in any moves to bring about changes in Iraq through military or peaceful means.

A WRITER in Al Ra'i addressed the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs' plan for convening a national conference on municipalities by the middle of September and the main problems which the conference is bound to tackle. Nazih said that the newly elected municipal councils and mayors who have given many promises to the voters in the election campaigns in July, are eager to keep their promises but are confronted with the reality that their coffers are empty and could not carry out the promised projects and the improved municipal services. The main issue facing the coming conference, stressed the writer, is the lack of funds at the local councils, which by no means can achieve miracles to satisfy the voters' wishes and fulfil their dreams.

The View from Fourth Circle

Shopping for cotton socks and the Arab future

IF YOU want better to understand the grandeur and the agony of the contemporary Arab World, do as I have done in the last several weeks: Go shopping for 100 per cent cotton socks in Damascus and Cairo.

To shop for cotton socks in the great citadels of Arab urbanism is not an ordinary commercial enterprise. This is not like, for example, popping into the Radio Shack shop on Gardens Street in Amman, the Toys 'R Us shop in Jeddah, or the Safeway in suburban Kuwait to transact purchases of some hard plastic commodities imported from some distant factories. Cairo and Damascus are different, richer urban places than the rest of the Arab World, and shopping for indigenous production there is a more meaningful yet demanding experience in both political and emotional terms.

My quest for the great Arab cotton socks was neither merely an exercise in particularist consumerism nor a directionless adventure in urban wandering. It was a combination of the two that had deeper implications for me about the condition of the Arab Nation (for those readers for whom the term 'Arab Nation' is perplexing or even jarring, I suggest relaxing in cotton garb and substituting the term with Arab region or Arab World). For me and many others in this area, Damascus and Cairo retain something special yet intangible — a feeling, a hope, a memory, a vague sense of self-confident Arabism, maybe only a comfortable ancient humanism that endures because it is based on the increasingly elusive logic and dynamism of what once made Arab cities great. The cotton socks, I suspect, may have been only the excuse that I used to spend hours walking around both cities.

The most personally and politically irritating thing that struck me about both Cairo and Damascus — cities that I have known and loved for most of my adult life — was the large number of security personnel especially but not only around government buildings. This is not peculiar to Cairo or Damascus in the modern Arab World, where security is usually the leading concern and largest expenditure of governments. What is so incongruous about the proliferation of armed security personnel in these two capital cities is the shocking contrast between the past and the present — between historical centres of great culture that once enriched the entirety of human civilisation on earth, and contemporary tensions that necessitate a desperate and sad resort to massive violence and the presence of armed guards on most street corners.

It was pretty distracting trying to find the perfect pair of cotton socks amidst so many soldiers and plainclothes security personnel. But — stimulated as I was by the faded riches of urban history and the still visible glory of centuries past — I persevered. I was determined to warm my feet in the soft comfort of 100 per cent Arab cotton, even if my spirit were to remain plagued by the agony of Arab political violence. I was intellectually and politically prepared to defend this exercise against even the most fearsome interrogation or show of force. Any armed policeman or security person who stopped me and asked what I was doing peeking around corners and into shops and asking many questions would be told that I was in search of Arab

grandeur in the form of 100 per cent cotton socks. I would not be intimidated.

The deterioration of the quality of modern Arab political culture in Damascus and Cairo was as visible as the equally glaring and lamentable deterioration in the fabric of the urban architecture. Cairo and Damascus are the only two Arab cities I know of — Algiers and Beirut get close, but they speak very softly these days — whose cultured urbanism is so deep that they could absorb a thick veneer of European architectural design in the 19th and early 20th centuries without destroying the underlying strengths of Arab cultural urbanism.

Despite their significant recent economic problems and political stress, the streets of Cairo and Damascus still speak of an audacious attempt at the turn of the century to become European. The grandeur and beauty of this attempt are visible to the eye today — streets that look Parisian, faded old tearooms that are very Viennese, shops that speak of London's venerable mercantile tradition. The impressive thing about Cairo and Damascus at the end of the 19th century was not that they dared to absorb the single most powerful global cultural-ideological force of the second millennium — the European Enlightenment in its expansive and often predatory colonial garb — but that they effectively succeeded in doing so without significantly upsetting the indigenous elements of urbanism that had made Cairo and Damascus such important cities by the middle of the 19th century.

My quest for the perfect Arab cotton socks, I realised, was not only about warming my feet but also about warming my spirit. I was fed up and mad about the ignominy of the modern Arab order — of politically and militarily violent Arab governments that treated their own people and other Arabs with only erratic respect and dignity, and of individual Arabs who were so despairing of improving their quality of life that they sought refuge in amassing personal riches while neglecting their wider responsibility to society as a whole.

The despair of ordinary families throughout the Arab World was leading to heightened political tensions that were in turn leading to greater misuse of power by unelected, unaccountable governments whose circles of supporters and advisers were consistently narrowing onto a smaller and ever more incestuous base. The outlet for most families, it seemed, was to watch imported junk on television and go shopping for imported junk in new mega-stores while acquiescing in new brands of bone-headed political morality characterised by the increasingly violent and immoderate tendencies of ruling establishments and growing oppositions.

This was hard for me to accept as the fate of the modern Arab Nation. There had to be signs of better ways, and I suspected that such signs were to be found in those places that had alternately generated and preserved the finest traditions of Arab culture and civilisation — our great Arab cities. I was not disappointed, for both Damascus and Cairo today, despite their political and economic challenges, retain the powerful elements of Arab/Islamic urban

culture that have been such important factors in the continuous renewal of Arab identity and culture for many centuries.

Perhaps the single most important element in this respect is the tradition of demographic pluralism and civility, of many different religions and ethnic groups living and working together to generate the kind of intellectual, economic and cultural dynamism that allowed these and other Arab cities to become such important international centres of trade, thought and science. The best Arab urbanism was, and remains, a synthesis of different identities and traditions; distinct quarters for Jews, Christians, Armenians, Kurds and other minorities were not necessarily barriers to their people's inclusion in society but delimiters of identities that are formally accepted and protected by the dominant Arab/Islamic culture.

The powerful synthesis of human identities still defines the great Arab cities of Cairo and Damascus. Like the beautiful architectural elements that still force themselves on the visitor from behind the faded paint and cracked facades of old buildings, the multi-cultural, humanistic vigour of old Arab urbanism still defiantly pokes its durable and beautiful head out of the jungle of political violence and materialistic moral vagrancy that defines so much of modern Arab culture.

The capital assets of civilisation that history has always denominated in the currency of urbanism should be very important to the Arab people today as we seek to replace political cultures of violence and exclusion with more sensible cultures of tolerance, participation and greater intellectual and material productivity. We do not need to go very far afield to find pointers towards the elements of our political redemption and our national salvation. Those pointers are within us and amongst us in great ancient citadels of urban civilisation such as Damascus and Cairo, in the tens of thousands of small villages and towns that dot the entire Arab World, and in persistent attempts such as ours in Jordan to liberalise and modernise our new political systems that are based on old cultural identities.

This was my conclusion at the end of my search for the perfect pair of Arab cotton socks. I was offered many fake substitutes — cheap, false gods of the thread, I thought — including polyester-cotton mixtures from the Far East and assorted high-tech pretenders from the industrialised North. Neither my spirit nor my feet would have any of them, though, and held out for pure cotton socks made in Cairo and Damascus. I found them in the end, as I knew I would, deep in the heart of the two cities. They were displayed with a brand of elegance and even pride that I did not detect among the sellers of imported juice-squeezers, foam sandals and cheap plastic toys who now dominate Arab markets, or among the ubiquitous uniformed and plain-clothed men who carry guns and who stalk every corner of the modern lands of the Arabs.

I paid my money and took my cotton socks and I walked away smiling and pleased, perhaps because I had verified something real about the Arab past, perhaps because I knew something good about the Arab future.

Israel obviously having second thoughts about deals with Palestinians

By Pascal B. Karmy

ISRAEL HAS not been honouring its commitments under the Oslo accord. Any person who has been observing the stream of negotiations, agreements and understandings reached between Israel and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) may come out with the impression that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres are having second thoughts or regrets about including the West Bank in the Oslo accord and would have preferred to restrict the accord to the Gaza Strip. An observer would also note that the Israeli delegations are interpreting the provisions of the Oslo accord quite restrictively with a view to curtailing the rights of the Palestinians in the West Bank or to reduce them to the minimum so as to protect Israel's interests and particularly those of settlers.

In consequence of Israeli policy, the West Bank has been mutilated or truncated by leaving parcels of it to the Palestinians and keeping the lion's share to Israel. This was done in the past by expropriations or

confiscations of Palestinian land to build settlements. Presently it is done by constructing roads through and around Palestinian towns under the pretext of protecting the Jewish settlements.

That not only obstructs the peace process but also constitutes a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, to which Israel is a party, and numerous relevant United Nations resolutions passed against Israel's actions since its occupation of Palestinian territories in 1967.

It seems clear to any impartial observer that the Israeli government is trying to create a sort of Palestinian "Bantustans" (as was envisioned by the demised apartheid South African rulers in South Africa for the blacks there) or separate small cantons severed from each other so as to prevent Palestinians from forming one compact unit of the West Bank and ultimately a Palestinian state with Gaza Strip. This division of the West Bank contradicts Article IV of the Oslo accord, which "views the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a single territorial unit whose integrity will be

preserved during the interim period."

If both these territories should be viewed as a single territorial unit, one of its components, the West Bank, should be maintained as a compact territorial unit in which about one-and-a-half million Palestinians live. Indeed, Ramallah, East Jerusalem, Nablus, Jenin, Hebron, Bethlehem and other Palestinian towns and villages are of the same importance to Palestinians.

The redeployment of Israeli military forces has been long overdue. Under Article XIII of the Oslo accord redeployment of the Israeli army should take place "not later than the eve of the elections for the Palestine Council." However, reached PLO-Israel reach an agreement covering the redeployment of Israeli military forces. Under this agreement, there will be a complete redeployment of Israeli forces in the rural zones (called Area B) while the Palestine police will assume responsibility for public order for Palestinians. But Israel will have overriding responsibility for security and for protecting Israelis.

The question of the Palestine Council has not so far been resolved. The negotiations have been turning in a vicious circle. No agreement has been reached on the number of council members and Israel is refusing to allow Palestinians of Jerusalem to run in the elections. Israel's stand on this matter contradicts Annex I of the Oslo accord, which stipulates that:

"Palestinians of Jerusalem who live there will have the right to participate in the election process."

This provision confers upon the Palestinians of Jerusalem the right to elect and be elected as well. The word "election" means "electing or being elected," according to the Oxford and West-

minster dictionaries.

Another important problem which calls for concrete resolution is the question of water. The Israelis have initially argued that the Palestinians in the West Bank have no right to the underground water resources and that they should accept the consumption of only a part of the water, the biggest share being allotted to the settlements. Now, apparently, Israel has conceded that the Palestinians have a right to the underground water. But the mechanism of implementing this right has been postponed. It should be remembered that Annex III of the Oslo accord provided that a water development programme should be prepared by experts from both sides and that both should cooperate in the management of water resources in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and that

cooperation will include proposals for studies and plans on water rights of each party as well as on equitable utilisation of joint water resources for implementation in and beyond the interim period.

Moreover, quite apart from the Oslo accord, Palestinians have been living in the West Bank and Gaza for centuries and thus have a superior right to the underground water resources than the newcomers, the Jewish settlers, whose settlements on occupied territories are "ab initio" illegal under international law.

I believe that PNA leader Yasser Arafat is conceding too much in accepting certain conditions in negotiations with Mr. Peres, especially those which are not in conformity with the Oslo accord provisions.

The last redeployment of the Israeli army will be completed by February or July 1997, according to the Tabu agreement. Hopefully, it will be honoured by Israel. But one wonders what will happen if the Likud Party wins the Israeli elections to the Knesset in 1996 and a new Israeli government is formed in 1997.

LETTERS

Facts distorted

suing office in Aleppo. The Lebanese participant is a university professor.

Also, the meeting was not conducted in a Geneva hotel under tight secrecy as the article claimed. Rather, the two meetings took place in an office of a U.N. mission. The Syrian and the Lebanese experts are old acquaintances, and I felt odd when I could talk to Israelis while the two experts shunned away all Israeli attempts to get close to them. They never exchanged jokes with the Israelis and the jokes they laughed at were not those told by the Israelis either. The Syrian and Lebanese experts conducted themselves like any expert would in a United Nations meeting.

The report did not speak of the other experts from the other countries to instigate that the meeting was between Israelis and Syrians. To add to the story of suspense, the report spoke about an accidental appearance in the hotel of members of the U.S. delegation which heads the multilateral talks on water resources, and supposedly asked the Israelis "what are you doing here?"

Actually, the U.S. delegation, which stayed at the same hotel, was the trade delegation that was negotiating with its Japanese counterpart on the famous agreement between their two countries. An American known to us was at the same hotel, and he was only an expert on the U.S. water delegation to the multilaterals. He is a technical person who works for the U.S. Corps of Engineers. I sat with him one day and he knew all about the U.N. meeting we were attending.

The report claimed that these meetings were kept secret. This is not true. The Israel Radio reported the meetings early July, and I commented on their report almost immediately after that.

The report quoted Mr. Katz Oz as saying that the Israelis obtained extremely important papers from the Syrian and the Lebanese delegates. Actually, the papers each of experts presented contained no more information than any Syrian and Lebanese paper contained. Such papers were repeatedly presented at international and regional seminars. I say this because I am familiar with the Syrian and Lebanese data; they are no secret, and any expert in the field can obtain them by looking up Syrian and Lebanese papers presented in Damascus, Amman, Cairo, the Arab League, Kuwait, UNDP seminars and elsewhere. I am actually surprised that the Israelis have not had them on file for a long time.

My comments are not meant to defend Syria. Nor am I their spokesman. The comments are nonetheless meant to defend an effort that I started when I headed the Jordanian delegation to the multilateral talks, an effort that aimed at pooling the expertise in the region and the advanced countries to help find collective answers to the many challenges facing us regarding water resources in the Middle East.

I believe the motive of the distortion of the proceedings and objectives of this international U.N. seminar is political. I further regret that professional meetings of experts representing only themselves are used for political fantasies through inaccurate press reporting. I do not believe such manoeuvres on the part of the Israeli press serves the cause of comprehensive peace that we all seek.

Dr. Muinther J. Haddadin,
Amman.

Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia swap diplomatic signals

ADDIS ABABA (Agencies)

— Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt engaged in a flurry of diplomacy on Monday over a failed assassination attempt against Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa met Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in Addis Ababa and officials said talks concerned investigations into who was behind the plot to kill Mr. Mubarak in the Ethiopian capital on June 26.

Mr. Mubarak said on Sunday his country was preparing to take unspecified measures against Sudan over the attempt to kill him.

"Foreign Minister Amr Musa will hold a meeting with the Ethiopian president, and on the basis of the information we will have from Ethiopia to present the results of the search," Egypt's foreign minister warned the Sudanese to act quickly.

"Any attempt to win time will be defeated because it is a dangerous issue," Mr. Musa said after returning from Ethiopia on Monday. "There is no joke in an attack on a president and we will not accept any sort of hedging."

Ethiopia identified one of the Egyptian gunman as Hussein Ahmad Shahit Alai, also known as Siraj Mohammad. He apparently carried forged Sudanese and Ethiopian passports.

Jordan seeks to host MENAFIO

(Continued from page 1)

there are already local, regional and international agencies, including the World Bank and its affiliates, to finance projects and the proposed bank would not serve any particular purpose.

The four "core" parties in the Middle East peace process — Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians — plus the U.S., Japan and several other countries supported the idea of MENAFIO being the predetermined forerunner of the bank.

But the Europeans wanted MENAFIO to be instituted as an experimental body whose track record during the first two years should decide whether it could be turned into a development bank.

The issue is expected to

Mubarak's motorcade.

Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir said he would send a delegation to Addis Ababa to discuss the allegations — which Sudan was denied.

In remarks broadcast on television late on Sunday, Lieutenant-General Bashir said he regretted Ethiopian measures taken against his country, including closing a Sudanese consulate and cutting its diplomatic presence in Khartoum.

Gen. Bashir he regretted the moves and promised to send a delegation to Ethiopia to present the results of the search. Egypt's foreign minister warned the Sudanese to act quickly.

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Jordan seeks to host MENAFIO

(Continued from page 1)

be decided during the next two meetings of the task force, in Rome in mid-September and in Washington in October, diplomatic sources said.

The Jordanian desire to host MENAFIO appears to reflect the fact that the body would be central to identifying projects for financing, including bilateral and multilateral grants and technical aid.

"We insist that the project identification process is done in Jordan," said the official. "Other aspects of the projects, including assessment etc. could be done elsewhere."

Meanwhile, Jordanian officials maintained in public that there had been no final decision that the proposed bank would be based in Cairo.

Addressing a prepara-

tory meeting on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit to be held in Amman in October, Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abu Ragheh said he had no official confirmation of the tactic.

"As far as we know, no official decision has been taken over this issue," said the minister, adding that establishment of the bank would be announced at the MENA summit.

Omaya Touqan, director-general of the Amman Financial Market and one of the key figures involved in preparing for the MENA summit, said: "If we are interested in hosting the bank, then we will pursue our objective through all means available to us."

Dr. Touqan avoided answering whether Jordan was indeed interested in hosting the bank.

Addressing a prepara-

Iraqi exiles want peaceful change

(Continued from page 1)

Relations between Iran and Iraq, whose eight-year war left a toll of one million troops and civilians killed or wounded, have often been tense since a U.N.-brokered cease-fire ended their conflict. They are both something of pariah states in the West.

Monday's editorial followed President Saddam's call last month on Iran to establish good relations with Iraq and return more than a 100 military and civilian planes. The aircraft took refuge in Iran during the 1991 Gulf war.

He also called on Iran to free thousands of prisoners of war. Iran is holding some 20,000 Iraqi prisoners, while Iraq keeps about 5,000 Red Cross.

"Is there a better timing to establish cooperation than now when the knife of America and Zionism is on Iraq's neck and only fingers away from Iran's neck?" Al Jumhoiriya added.

Kuwait said on Monday it had prepared 116 million dinars (\$385 million) in claims for compensation from Iraq from environmental damage caused by Baghdad's 1990-91 occupation.

Women conference begins

(Continued from page 1)

hold us accountable. They will look for concrete signs that Beijing, in 1995, was followed by real action."

Dr. Ghali took aim at countries, which he did not name, balking at granting equality for women, by denying them the same access as men to economic, social and political power.

"Equality before the law is being achieved in many countries," the U.N. secretary-general said.

"But equality in fact remains an elusive goal in all countries. Equality of dignity is far from being achieved, with discrimination on the basis of gender still widespread."

"Real and concrete steps are still required, to ensure equality of opportunity in education, and equality of access to health system, to education and to political power."

Dr. Ghali's words drove at

and biological weapons programme, also said to be "certainly sees no lifting of the sanctions in the foreseeable future."

Mr. Ekeus, who briefed the German minister on his recent visits to Iraq and Jordan, said that he outlined to him "the seriousness of the situation" following the latest revelations.

In Amman, the head of the U.N. special commission met with Gen. Kamel who was responsible for military programmes before his defection to Jordan.

Mr. Ekeus said the U.N. mission had become "seriously concerned" in recent days about Iraqi biological weapons.

Iraq claimed to have destroyed these, but that had to be verified, Ekeus said.

"Baghdad has the chemical components to build new biological weapons," he also stressed.

Regarding the present situation in Iraq following the defections, Mr. Ekeus said that in the civil administration "things are upside down."

Mr. Ekeus spoke out in favour of continued German military participation in the U.N. inspection mission for Iraq, and he called on the Iraqi government to cooperate fully with Mr. Ekeus and his team.

would erode two decades of gains.

Dr. Ghali's speech was read by Under Secretary-General Ismat Kittani after the U.N. chief came down with a high fever.

Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto mounted a defense on Islam, urging the world not to view it as a religion that denigrated women.

"Islam forbids injustice," Ms. Bhutto said. "As a Muslim woman I feel a special responsibility to counter the propaganda of a handful that Islam gives women a secondary status."

She stressed the importance of distinguishing between Islamic teachings and social taboos sprung from the traditions of a patriarchal society."

The squabble is chiefly over wordings on fertility control and abortion, but also over the union of "equality," contested by some Muslims as incompatible with Islamic law.

Women activists fear that if the discord is not resolved, a fudgy of conservative text

The factors behind Hamas' suicide bombings

By Beverly Milton-Edwards

The two other men were identified as Mustafa Hamza and Izzat Yassin, both believed to be Egyptians. Sudan dismisses the charges, saying only one Egyptian entered its territory and that he subsequently disappeared. Mr. Mubarak escaped the attack unharmed, and later implicated Sudan in the incident. Egypt has repeatedly accused Sudan of harboring and training militants trying to topple the Cairo government and impose a purist Islamic state by force.

Meanwhile Ethiopia said it had arrested people suspected of being two Sudanese aid officials in Addis Ababa.

A Foreign Ministry statement on Sunday said investigations were continuing but that the two murder victims were known to have had disputes with individuals whom they had sacked. It gave no further details of the arrests.

Dr. Abdullah Al Gaali, head of the International Islamic Relief Agency, and Mohammad Al Fatihi Youssi,

the Egyptian gunman as Hussein Ahmad Shahit Alai, also known as Siraj Mohammad. He apparently carried forged Sudanese and Ethiopian passports.

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wants talks with Ethiopia over allegations that it gave sanctuary to three Egyptian fugitives said to have been involved in the attack on Mr. Mubarak.

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Economy

Saudi coffers saddled with growing public services

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Saudi Arabia plans to carry out sweeping reforms and cut subsidies to restore balance to its budget but it faces an increasing bill of services to its fast-growing population, experts said Monday.

Although the world's leading oil producer and exporter has decided to hike fees on telephone, electricity and aviation, its commitment to providing free education, health and water to its people will unlikely be affected.

"Services to citizens constitute a major burden on the budget but I don't think they will be affected by spending cuts," said Henry Azzam, chief economist at the Saudi National Commercial Bank.

Allocations for health, education, water, communication and social services stood at around 55 billion Saudi riyals (\$14.6 billion) in 1995, accounting for more than one third of the \$40 billion budget. Another 10 billion riyals (\$2.66 billion) were earmarked for social aid.

The figure is far higher than a decade ago as the population was around two thirds of the current population of nearly 18 million.

Experts said the value of services would steadily rise in the coming years as the Saudi population is growing by between three and four per cent annually because the government is encouraging natives to have more children.

They expected the govern-

ment to rationalise such services by making them more efficient but they ruled out any major cuts in such allocations.

They referred to the sixth development plan, which would focus on upgrading services to the citizens apart from development of the non-oil sector.

The 1995-1999 plan stated that one of the government's strategic goals would be to develop the Saudi society, provide it with social and health and allow it to effectively contribute to development programmes, the experts said.

"The state coffers could receive less funds in the future due to the drop in oil prices at a time when financing social services for the citizens depends mainly on the oil income, which accounts for more than two thirds of the total revenues," said Isman Abu Huleika, an expert at the Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consulting (GOIC).

"The question is: How can we maintain the level and quality of such services? The answer could be through increasing non-oil earnings, encouraging the private sector to play a greater role, upgrading the efficiency of social programmes and encouraging the cooperative societies and other commercial and charity organisations to set up economic and social projects," he pointed out. Mr. Abu Huleika said.

Apart from services, Saudi

Arabia is also burdened by high spending on weapons as part of plans to bolster its army following the Gulf war.

Such commitments have combined with a decline in oil prices to create a large deficit in its budget, peaking at around \$33.6 billion in 1991 before easing to nearly \$10.6 billion in 1994. The shortfall was slashed to around \$4 billion in 1995 after the kingdom trimmed expenditure.

The sixth development plan, details of which were released two months ago, forecast spending of an average \$40 billion a year, one of lowest expenditure levels in Saudi history.

But the plan includes other unique features as it focuses on privatisation, attracting investment, and increasing non-oil revenues.

Privatisation plans, announced by King Fahd last year, cover airport services and the national airlines, water and electricity and other sectors. These would be coupled with cutting subsidies, another major burden on the Saudi budget. But the government has ruled out imposing income taxes after such a move triggered mass resignations eight years ago.

"Contribution by the private sector to social services has become necessary. The government should now determine the extent of such a contribution to ensure such services remain intact," Mr. Abu Huleika said.

Businessmen urge APEC to speed up world trade rules

NEXTOR BEACH, California (R) — Business leaders from the United States, Japan and 16 other Pacific Rim nations urged APEC leaders to speed up the liberalisation of world trade rules established last year under the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

In a report that will be forwarded to leaders of the 18-Nation Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the business executives said hastening implementation of the GATT Uruguay Round commitments is a key component aimed at creating the world's largest free-trade bloc by the year 2010.

Their proposals are to be presented as a starting point for high level talks set for November in Osaka, Japan.

Leading executives of large and small companies from the member countries reached agreement on the recommendations Saturday as they wrapped up their third and final meeting this year in advance of the APEC summit. The meeting of APEC's Pacific Business Forum opened Friday in this beach resort outside Los Angeles.

Members of the Pacific Business Forum said all the measures contained in the report were agreed to by consensus. And they stressed that the report focused on

proposed reforms that they believed would achieve immediate, tangible results.

However, a number of the recommendations appear likely to face difficulty in winning acceptance from APEC leaders.

Sandra Kristoff, the U.S. ambassador to APEC, said in August that the United States could not offer to accelerate measures under the GATT Uruguay Round, as it already has met its commitments and the Clinton administration has limited statutory authority to go further.

The business leaders acknowledged they did not consider "political" obstacles.

"We just laid out what we thought should happen," said Les McCraw, the chairman and chief executive officer of Fluor Corp. and the U.S. co-chairman of the meeting.

After their last summit in Bogor, Indonesia, last November, APEC leaders pledged to achieve free trade and investment in the region by 2020. The Pacific Business Forum was charged with devising a plan for the APEC leaders to consider when they meet again in Osaka in November.

The report also urges APEC governments to:

— Simplify procedures for obtaining business residency visas by 1996 and to introduce visa-free business travel throughout the APEC region by 1999.

— Ease and harmonise custom clearance procedures by 2000.

— Harmonise national product standards by 1999.

— Increase cooperation in safeguarding intellectual property rights by 2000.

— Establish a private-government task force to identify infrastructure needs in the region and develop investment guidelines by 1996.

In addition to a specific set of time limits urged for each measure recommended in the report, the business leaders called for a review system with "markers" to measure success in carrying out their plan.

U.S. government changing how it measures growth, productivity

WASHINGTON (AP) — As

if Americans didn't have enough to worry about with stagnant wages and uncertain job prospects, now the government is preparing a revision of economic history that will show the current recovery was even weaker than previously thought.

The effort is part of a massive overhaul of the government's primary measure of the economy — the gross domestic product (GDP). All of this will have a profound effect on our understanding of such critical pocketbook issues as U.S. productivity growth and gains in American living standards.

Starting in December, the government will move the old GDP measurement into the background and replace it with a new process for totting up the value of all the goods and services produced each year in a \$7 trillion economy.

The business leaders acknowledged they did not consider "political" obstacles.

"We just laid out what we thought should happen," said Les McCraw, the chairman and chief executive officer of Fluor Corp. and the U.S. co-chairman of the meeting.

After their last summit in Bogor, Indonesia, last November, APEC leaders pledged to achieve free trade and investment in the region by 2020. The Pacific Business Forum was charged with devising a plan for the APEC leaders to consider when they meet again in Osaka in November.

The report also urges APEC governments to:

— Simplify procedures for obtaining business residency visas by 1996 and to introduce visa-free business travel throughout the APEC region by 1999.

— Ease and harmonise custom clearance procedures by 2000.

— Harmonise national product standards by 1999.

— Increase cooperation in safeguarding intellectual property rights by 2000.

— Establish a private-government task force to identify infrastructure needs in the region and develop investment guidelines by 1996.

In addition to a specific set of time limits urged for each measure recommended in the report, the business leaders called for a review system with "markers" to measure success in carrying out their plan.

amount of money going into their pockets.

"We haven't changed reality. All we have changed is the numbers we put down on paper," said David Wyss, economist at Dri-McGraw Hill Inc. "The economy didn't change just because we are counting it differently."

So far in this recovery, which began in March 1991, the economy has been expanding at a puny annual rate of 2.6 per cent, instead of the 3.1 per cent average previously believed. Under either figure, this is shaping up to be the weakest upturn in the post-World War II period.

By contrast, the revised GDP measurement makes the period before 1987 look more robust, boosting average growth by about one-half percentage point.

While the average American may not pay attention to year-to-year changes in the GDP, these revisions will have a profound impact on other measurements that do strike closer to home. One of these is productivity.

For U.S. living standards to increase, it takes steady gains in productivity, the amount of production obtained per hour of work.

But with less output, according to the GDP measurement, productivity will look weaker as well.

Under the old figures, productivity appeared to be rising by two per cent a year in this recovery, compared to one per cent annually since 1973. But the revisions will show productivity rising by 1.3 per cent a year in the 1970s and 1980s, compared to 1.4 per cent in this upturn, a negligible difference.

By wiping out the previous pickup in productivity, the measurement dashes one of the hopes of the Clinton administration — that the

economy was finally breaking out of the stagnant productivity period from 1973 to 1990.

Tiny increases in productivity are the reason wage gains have been depressed since 1973 and Americans' standard of living looks so anemic when compared to the boom years of the 1950s and 1960s.

One might wonder why the Clinton administration, already facing a tough reelection campaign, would produce a statistical revision that is going to weaken its boasting rights about the economy.

Commerce Department economists say they are simply trying to correct a long-standing problem with the GDP measurement. Lewis Alexander, the department's chief economist and a Clinton appointee, said he has gotten nothing but support from others in the administration.

"This is the right thing to do. The new numbers are clearly better," he said.

The problem being addressed is the use of a base year, currently 1987, to establish fixed values for the various components of output in computing the inflation-adjusted GDP figures.

That system works reasonably well as long as the prices of all goods are generally rising at the same rate.

But it was thrown out of sync, first in the 1970s because of the huge run-up in energy prices, and more recently with the sharp drop in computer prices. Commerce analysts estimate that computers account for 60 per cent of the overstatement of GDP in the current recovery.

To fix the problem, Commerce is jettisoning the fixed base year and switching to a rolling average, called it a "chain-weighted" measurement.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Be alert to danger in the business world this morning, and then a fine opportunity may present itself from far away.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A successful business person of your acquaintance can give fine advice for getting ahead, so follow it.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Don't light into a good friend today about some promise made, and later tonight you can discuss your ambitions with others.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Don't mix into an altercation between a family tie and an outsider, and then you can carry through with inspired ideas.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Don't run away from your tasks because you get a flash idea which is not good, and later today you can enjoy good friends.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you don't commit yourself early today to some new interest, you can easily get some family matter properly handled.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) An associate gives you a new idea which is not very good, so forget it and later get routines improved with other partners.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't waste time talking to a stranger and then you can find some new and profitable kind of income.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Don't be extravagant where luxury is concerned today, and find more modern ways of increasing income.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Postpone handling that vexing matter at home and plan the future more wisely so you can be more successful.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't permit some outside affair to get you away from your tasks. Be with persons who can assist you to make personal progress.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Don't waste time gossiping this morning, and then tonight you can handle outside affairs with intelligence.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

32C 32D

Economy

Saudi coffers saddled with growing public services

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Saudi Arabia plans to carry out sweeping reforms and cut subsidies to restore balance to its budget but it faces an increasing bill of services to its fast-growing population, experts said Monday.

Although the world's leading oil producer and exporter has decided to hike fees on telephone, electricity and aviation, its commitment to providing free education, health and water to its people will unlikely be affected.

"Services to citizens constitute a major burden on the budget but I don't think they will be affected by spending cuts," said Henry Azzam, chief economist at the Saudi National Commercial Bank.

Allocations for health, education, water, communication and social services stood at around 55 billion Saudi riyals (\$14.6 billion) in 1995, accounting for more than one third of the \$40 billion budget. Another 10 billion riyals (\$2.66 billion) were earmarked for social aid.

The figure is far higher than a decade ago as the population was around two thirds of the current population of nearly 18 million.

Experts said the value of services would steadily rise in the coming years as the Saudi population is growing by between three and four per cent annually because the government is encouraging natives to have more children.

They expected the govern-

ment to rationalise such services by making them more efficient but they ruled out any major cuts in such allocations.

They referred to the sixth development plan, which would focus on upgrading services to the citizens apart from development of the non-oil sector.

The 1995-1999 plan stated that one of the government's strategic goals would be to develop the Saudi society, provide it with social and health and allow it to effectively contribute to development programmes, the experts said.

"The state coffers could receive less funds in the future due to the drop in oil prices at a time when financing social services for the citizens depends mainly on the oil income, which accounts for more than two thirds of the total revenues," said Isman Abu Huleika, an expert at the Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consulting (GOIC).

"The question is: How can we maintain the level and quality of such services? The answer could be through increasing non-oil earnings, encouraging the private sector to play a greater role, upgrading the efficiency of social programmes and encouraging the cooperative societies and other commercial and charity organisations to set up economic and social projects," he pointed out. Mr. Abu Huleika said.

Apart from services, Saudi

Arabia is also burdened by high spending on weapons as part of plans to bolster its army following the Gulf war.

Such commitments have combined with a decline in oil prices to create a large deficit in its budget, peaking at around \$33.6 billion in 1991 before easing to nearly \$10.6 billion in 1994. The shortfall was slashed to around \$4 billion in 1995 after the kingdom trimmed expenditure.

The sixth development plan, details of which were released two months ago, forecast spending of an average \$40 billion a year, one of lowest expenditure levels in Saudi history.

But the plan includes other unique features as it focuses on privatisation, attracting investment, and increasing non-oil revenues.

Privatisation plans, announced by King Fahd last year, cover airport services and the national airlines, water and electricity and other sectors. These would be coupled with cutting subsidies, another major burden on the Saudi budget. But the government has ruled out imposing income taxes after such a move triggered mass resignations eight years ago.

"Contribution by the private sector to social services has become necessary. The government should now determine the extent of such a contribution to ensure such services remain intact," Mr. Abu Huleika said.

Apart from services, Saudi

Businessmen urge APEC to speed up world trade rules

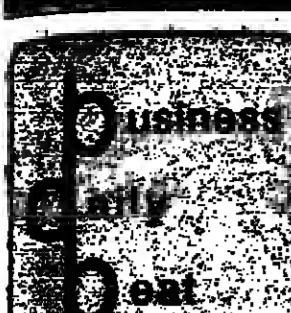
NEXTOR BEACH, California (R) — Business leaders from the United States, Japan and 16 other Pacific Rim nations urged APEC leaders to speed up the liberalisation of world trade rules established last year under the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

In a report that will be forwarded to leaders of the 18-Nation Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the business executives said hastening implementation of the GATT Uruguay Round commitments is a key component aimed at creating the world's largest free-trade bloc by the year 2010.

Their proposals are to be presented as a starting point for high level talks set for November in Osaka, Japan.



how it
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A review
of economic news
from the Arabic press

Abu Hassan: Stoppage of exports to Iraq unimaginable

****EXPORTS TO Iraq during the first eight months of this year amounted to about JD 250 million, nearly 50 per cent of the total Jordanian exports during the period (excluding phosphate and potash), the records of the Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI). The exports by 250 companies included 75 products of food, medicines, cleaning materials, threads and stationery. According to ACI President Khalid Abu Hassan many Jordanian industries were set up solely to export to Iraq and meet the needs of that market. As such, he pointed out, it is difficult to switch to other neighbouring markets because they have similar industries and even seek to export their products to Jordan. Noting that the same situation applies to Syria and Lebanon, Mr. Abu Hassan stressed that there was no alternative to the Iraqi market. He said that what Jordan had achieved in the industrial sector and in exports was "the fruit of 20 years of building." He said the industrial sector and other related sectors provide 125,000 regular and steady employment opportunities and account for about 20 per cent of the gross domestic product. The ACI chief said the industrial process was not an easy task as an industry would require four to five years to show smooth production and another four to five years to secure reliable and steady markets for exports; meaning a total of about ten years to build a complete and comprehensive production-export operation. Mr. Abu Hassan said it would be unimaginable to think of the consequences should exports to Iraq stop and warned against accepting international promises which never materialise and which always been fictitious (Al Dastour).**

****THE ARAB Bank Ltd. earned a total of JD 116.9 million during the first six months of this year bringing up its net profit after tax to JD 35.7 million. Earnings and net income on June 30, 1994 were JD 110.2 million and JD 28.8 million respectively. The tax that the bank has to pay amounts to JD 15.1 million. According to the semi-annual report, the Arab Bank's financial "position" has exceeded \$21 billion with total assets plus contingent accounts amounting to JD 11,580.5 million compared to JD 10,389.2 million on June 30, 1994. Cash and quasi cash stood at JD 4.8 billion whereas total loans and credits grew by 17.8 per cent to reach JD 3,519 million. Total deposits increased by 11.2 per cent and stood at JD 7,782 million (Al Aswaq).**

****WITH THE approval of the general assemblies of the National Engineering Industries Company and the National Multi Industries Company, the two firms have merged into a new entity called the National Multi Engineering Industries with a JD 26.25 million capital that will be raised to JD 30 million through a private offering to shareholders. According to Aref Zurqiveb, board chairman of the two merging companies said the new company would be the largest industrial complex in Jordan comprising 10 factories that will manufacture tiny and thin varnished cables, poly propylene for the packaging and wrapping industries, adhesive tape, copper rods and other products for communication and electrical usage. He indicated that some plants have started production two months ago and that an agreement was signed to sell Syria 20 tonnes of varnished wires each month. The company will also be putting on the market within a month its new liquid battery called Newstar. The total assets of the new company amount to JD 36.58 million (Al Aswaq).**

U.K. says world arms competition tougher than ever

ALDERSHOT, England (R) — Britain's arms industry faces stiffer competition in a shrinking market and must offer packages of equipment rather than individual products, the defence ministry's chief salesman has said.

Charles Masefield, head of the Defence Export Services Organisation, said the world's top three exporters of military equipment — the United States, Britain and France — all aimed to capture new trade in a market likely to contract 25 per cent in the next 10 years.

"(Competitors) have never been more aggressive. That is both their industries and their governments," he told a news conference to open Britain's biennial Royal Navy and British Army equipment exhibition. "We don't want to see companies that are not going to win muddy the water for those who can," he said.

Mr. Masefield also said the government would no longer support more than one British firm going for the same export deal.

"We don't want to see companies that are not going to win muddy the water for those who can," he said.

He said licensing was tightly regulated with applications rejected daily. "We are only selling to stable regimes which are benign and who are wishing to use their equipment for defence," he said.

But a coup could see equipment fall into the wrong hands, he acknowledged. "You can't guard against a change of regime."

Financial Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

Currency	New York Close Date: 4/9/95	Tokyo Close Date: 4/9/95
Sterling Pound	1.5560	1.5601*
Deutsche Mark	1.4678	1.4596
Swiss Franc	1.1965	1.1963*
French Franc	5.0464	5.0383*
Japanese Yen	87.43	97.10
European Currency Unit	1.7765	1.8811*

* 100 for 100
** London Mid Rate for non-US currencies. *A. Italics 1,000/00 or equivalent.

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.65	5.68	5.65	5.62
Sterling Pound	6.50	6.50	6.56	6.62
Deutsche Mark	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00
Swiss Franc	2.62	2.62	2.62	2.62
French Franc	5.56	5.56	5.56	5.56
Japanese Yen	0.62	0.56	0.50	0.56
European Currency Unit	5.55	5.50	5.55	5.62

Interbank Mid Rate for non-US currencies. *A. Italics 1,000/00 or equivalent.

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm*	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	380.15	7.50	Silver	5.31	0.120

* 22 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 4/9/1995		
Currency	Ibid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.710	0.712
Sterling Pound	1.1046	1.1104
Deutsche Mark	0.4860	0.4884
Swiss Franc	0.5937	0.5967
French Franc	0.1406	0.1413
Japanese Yen	0.7315	0.7352
Dutch Guilder	0.4336	0.4358
Swedish Krona	0.0444	0.0444
Italian Lira	0.0438	0.0440
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000
Other Currencies		
Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.4670	1.4970
Lebanese Lira*	0.043090	0.044000
Saudi Riyal	0.18903	0.19040
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3000	2.3400
Qatari Riyal	0.1938	0.1952
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2180
Omani Riyal	1.8350	1.8450
UAR Dirham	0.1928	0.1936
Greek Drachma*	0.2878	0.3270
Cypriot Pound	1.5075	1.5275

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES		
Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.		
One U.S. dollar	1.3430/40	Canadian dollar
	1.4782/92	Deutschmarks
	1.6338/48	Dutch guilders
	1.1944/54	Swiss francs
	29.99/03	Belgian francs
	5.0348/98	French francs
	1623.64/6	Italian lire
	97.32/42	Japanese yen
	7.2820/20	Swedish crowns
	6.3810/60	Norwegian crowns
	5.6680/30	Danish crowns
One Sterling	\$1.5584/94	
One ounce of gold	\$379.85/380.35	

UAE needs more steel projects — study

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) needs to set up more steel projects to face growing consumption and cut a large import bill, the state-run Emirates Industrial Bank (EIB) has said.

The UAE, a major oil producer, has nine steel rolling plants but only five are operational with a production capacity of 120,000 tonnes per year and an actual output

of 65-70 per cent of capacity, EIB said in its weekly bulletin.

Steel imports, mostly from Qatar and Turkey, have jumped over the past five years from 375,000 tonnes 680,000 tonnes per year due to a construction upswing in the emirates, the study said.

"Given these bare facts, the economics of a steel project undoubtedly appear to be positive and clearly need

further examination," it said. "What is being proposed is not an investment for making raw steel but a project catering for the needs of the domestic construction industry, which is finishing mill capable of producing steel bars and rods."

It suggested building a steel plant with a capacity of 200,000 tonnes and investment of 350 million dirhams (\$95.3 million). But it stressed the project needed foreign partners for technology.

"An investment of such magnitude could not be

realistically made by a single investor. The foreign collaboration would be required not just for financing purposes but, more importantly, for help with technology, start-up and management," the bulletin said.

UAE private investors are considering building a steel plant at a cost of around \$408 million and production capacity of 600,000 tonnes per year. The project has been on the cards for several years and business sources said the delay was due to its large capital.

Steel and other capital intensive projects are highly feasible in the Gulf given its abundant energy resources. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE — sit atop nearly 465 billion barrels of oil and 19 trillion cubic metres (633.3 trillion cubic feet) of gas.

Construction is the second biggest component of the UAE's gross domestic product after oil, standing at around 12.2 billion dirhams (\$3.32 billion) in 1993.

Toyota struggling to stay No. 1 in Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — Toyota Motor Corp. is struggling to maintain its decades-long dominant position, facing a revival among its domestic competitors and increased threats from foreign carmakers in the Japanese market.

Japan's largest carmaker appointed vice president Hiroshi Okuda as new president last month, leaving him with the tough mission of recouping its market share, which plunged below 40 per cent of year-on-year gains.

He said licensing was tightly regulated with applications rejected daily. "We are only selling to stable regimes which are benign and who are wishing to use their equipment for defence," he said.

But a coup could see equipment fall into the wrong hands, he acknowledged. "You can't guard against a change of regime."

Model.

"At last, we are likely to get through the long tunnel," a Nissan spokesman said. "We have concentrated on our sales division by boosting the number of sales personnel. Our effort has finally paid off."

Nissan's production in July jumped 13.1 per cent to 158,000 and sales expanded 6.2 per cent to 119,000 to post the ninth consecutive month of year-on-year gains.

Toyota, in a bid to achieve an immediate increase in its market share, is widely expected to further reduce prices. "Toyota is still wealthy and strong enough to cut prices," Mr. Matsushima said. "This is one of the easiest measures to help the company recover."

But a Toyota spokesman denied this was even a possibility. "Prices have already been reduced to the lowest possible level," the spokesman said. "If we cut further, we cannot expect to make a profit. It is unrealistic."

Instead, the company is expecting much from a plan to introduce a fully restyled Crown luxury model this month, he said. The Crown was once Toyota's leading profit maker, beating other luxury cars in Japan.

Meanwhile, imported cars are gradually gaining momentum in the Japanese market, threatening to grab a larger slice of the market.

Sales of imported motor vehicles in Japan surged 17.4 per cent to 35,766 units in July, posting a record high for the month and 21 months of uninterrupted gains.

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Sports

Fukuoka spent \$3b on Student Games

NEW YORK (AFP) — The chances of a U.S. Open final showdown between co-number ones Steffi Graf and Monica Seles improved tremendously here Sunday with the ouster of 1994 women's champion Arantxa Sanchez Vicario.

The third-seeded Spaniard made the earliest exit by a defending Open women's champion since 1986, losing to 14th seed Mary Joe Frazier 1-6, 6-4, 6-4.

The biggest stunner so far at the \$9.86 million tournament denied Sanchez Vicario her seventh consecutive quarter-final berth and sent Fernandez into a match with ninth seed Gabriela Sabatini.

Keiichi Kuwahara, speaking a day after the 12-day Student Games closed, indicated the city may — despite worries about high-budget capital projects — one day bid to stage the Olympics.

The 72-year-old mayor added: "I don't know if I'll be still alive then... but I take the reputed success of this Universiade as the first step."

The three billion dollars spent on the Universiade went into building six new sports facilities as well as roads which city officials say will spur the urban redevelopment of this 1,000-year-old port city.

But some citizens groups have warned that excessive investment in construction — at the expense of welfare and education — would cause the city's finances, which depend on bond issues for 16 per cent of its budget, to collapse.

Having secured only limited sponsorship money at a time of slow economic recovery, the city also spent 170 million dollars on running the biennial event, which attracted a record 5,740 athletes and officials from 162 countries.

An average 65 per cent of the 150,000 seats at venues for the 12-sport games were filled daily, "exceeding our expectations," games ticketing official Shigeru Imafuku said.

Fukuoka, which will stage the 1997 Pan-Pacific swimming championships, has already bid for the 2001 East Asian Games for which the Japanese City of Osaka is also a candidate.

"The Universiade was a fantastic publicity for Fukuoka," said sports supremo Primo Nebinto, who heads the Student Games governing body and the powerful International Amateur Athletic Association.

The next games will be held at the Italian island of Sicily in 1997 and the Spanish resort of Majorca in 1999.

much as I can against players like Arantxa."

Reigning Wimbledon champions Pete Sampras and Graf advanced in much different fashion earlier.

Big-serving Australian Mark Philippoussis, an 18-year-old ranked 93rd in the world, gave world number two Sampras a scare before falling 6-7 (5-7), 7-5, 7-5, 6-3. The two-hour, 50-minute triumph by Sampras sends him into a round of 16 matchup with friend and 15th seed fellow American Todd Martin.

Sampras served 27 aces to 15 for Philippoussis, who had nine double faults to 14 by Sampras. The American had 69 winners and 33 unforced errors to 59 winners and 40 errors for Philippoussis.

"His serve was so big I had a hard time reading it," Sampras said. "I was kind of confused out there. I looked like an idiot. He's very dangerous. I played well when I had to. I will have to play a little better as the tournament goes along."

Martin, a 1994 semi-finalist here, reached the round of 16 by beating Colombia's Mauricio Hadad 6-2, 6-1, 6-3.

Unheralded two-third volleys Byron Black of Zimbabwe and Michael Tebbutt of Australia advanced to the round of 16. Tebbutt faces

Sabatini, who reached the quarter-finals here for a ninth straight year by eliminating 14-year-old Swiss rookie Martina Hingis 6-2, 6-4.

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